

The newsletter of the former pupils of the old Barling School is aimed at all ex-pupils, staff and friends of the school

Special Interest Articles:

- Reunion Lunches
- Reunion News
- The Holmstead family
- Policing in the villages
- Memories



Reunion Lunches

A group of us meet for lunch every few months to catch up on news, and socialise, but also to plan the main reunion events.

We meet at the Castle Inn, Little Wakering from 12.15 to 3.00 pm

Remaining Dates for 2012-2013

October 13th 2012
January 12th 2013
April 13th 2013
July 13th 2013
October 12th 2013

All friends and partners are welcome.

At the last lunch everyone wrote a short paragraph of relating to their memories. You will find them throughout this edition, and there will be more in the next edition of Small Beginnings

A Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you and yours

I remember the time when we lived in Jail Farm. We had a mulberry tree in the front of the house and my sister Sonia used to sit at the top eating the fruit covered in red juice. One night when coming home from Barling School, I ran from behind the bus and ended up under Mr Sutton's car. Fortunately I only had a cut leg and face. He said this would happen some day and always slowed down when passing.

Gordon and Pauline

The Holmstead family

My grand-father, Ernest Samuel HOLMSTEAD, was born in October 1886. He was the only son of a late marriage between William Holmstead a widower with a large brood of children and his 2nd wife, Emily Morley (nee Parish) who was a widow with several children of her own. William was 56 yrs old and Emily 42 yrs old when Ernest was born. A number of the Holmstead children from Williams first marriage to Sarah GODWARD went to Barling School including 3 little girls, Mary, Ellen and Martha. They were three of the fourteen Day 1 pupils on the day the school opened, then later another sister Tamar and my Granddad. William was a farmer as was his father William and grandfather William before him. He ran a number of farms over the 1880's in the area and was farm bailiff at Barling Hall for many years. My Grandfather Ernest was born there.

Ernie as he was known, was a pupil at Barling School from June 1891 to December 1898. He would have reached 12 years old by then and expected to work. My Dad said children worked from approx 12 years old back then and that his father took up a job working for a brick maker, loading bricks onto barges for transport. That would have been a hard job for a wee boy and I can't think that any 12 year boys nowadays would have been keen to tackle such a task.

We have some connection to the RAYNER family as a couple of Granddad's older half-sisters married Rayners. Mum told me about the two Calebs, she knew them as "old Caleb" and "young Caleb" as the two sisters Emily and Amelia were in contact with Granddad back then. We have since lost touch with the more recent generations. The Holmstead and Rayner families belonged to The Peculiar People and as such had a staunch church lifestyle.

Granddad Ernie married his 1st wife Florence DEATH in 1913 and had a daughter Ethel. Florence died only a couple of years later. He then married my Grandmother, Lucy TONG and my father Ernest George was born.

My mother worked with my Granddad Ernie in the late 1940's/early 1950's as by then he was head gardener at Claybury Hospital, growing all the fruit and vegetables for staff and residents meals as well as designing all the ornamental gardens, massive rockeries and a maze for the residents to wander in. It was through Granddad that Mum met his son, my Dad.

It must have been so hard for Mum and Dad to leave England and all their extended family in England to go to a country on the other side of the world. It would have been thought of as a one way ticket in those days as travelling by ship. Dad came to New Zealand first, leaving the RAF and joining the RNZAF. Mum then travelled over by herself a couple of years later and they married a couple of days after she arrived in 1956.

My Granddad (Ernest Samuel) and Granny (Lucy Frances) joined them to live in NZ when I was a toddler in the late 1950s. My Dad's half sister

(Ethel) with husband and children followed as well. Dad bought an acre of land when he arrived. We all lived together in Blenheim which is the top part of the South Island of New Zealand. We had the back part of the land section with a big house and of course a massive garden full of vegetables, berry bushes and fruit trees so the gardeners in the family could continue to work the land. Granny and Granddad had a one bedroom house that Dad had built right next door to us. Aunty and Uncle lived with my cousins in a house they built on the front section of the land. So here the Holmsteads remain, transplanted to New Zealand. We are an endangered species but not extinct. My husband and I do not have any children but my sister and partner have a teenage daughter, and my brother and partner have a teenage daughter and son. We have been back to England a few times, with both my sister and brother living for periods there and will no doubt be over to visit again in the future, so the link to the Barling and Little Wakering area remains. My 93 year old father, Ernest George Holmstead, is very pleased to tell tales of his parents that he knows and every so often I find out a new useful snippet of the area that he hasn't previously passed on. His eyes light up when I show him the latest photos or information I have found on the web and the Barling School newsletter has been a lovely unexpected surprise to come across.

If anyone in the area has contact with the Rayner family, I would be most interested to make contact with them again.

Anne Holmstead
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Ernest Samuel aged 7



Ernest Samuel and Lucy Frances TONG

Tony Deeks and I came top of the class at Barling School, and were taken to the Festival of Britain in 1951. Then in the evening we went to the Palladium to see Danny Kaye on stage.

Les Gilkes

PC John Marshall

John was born near Bishop Auckland in Durham in 1922. He started his working life as a trainee carpenter and after a short while he joined the Royal Air Force and was trained in Canada. He was sent to Rochford Aerodrome where he met his future wife Kay. During World War II, having previously trained on Spitfires, he served as a Fighter Pilot flying rocket-firing Typhoons. The rocket-firing Typhoon fighter played a pivotal role in the Allies' success in the air and on the ground in World War II, from the Normandy beach-head to the Battle of the Bulge and the final struggle for Germany.



He supported the American lead campaign in the 'Battle of the Bulge' and on one occasion he was forced down through bad weather and had to bail out by parachute. On Christmas day in 1944, John was shot down but managed to bail out by parachute yet again. Luckily he came down behind American lines and was in time to be treated to a Christmas Day dinner. John had built up in excess of 1000 flying hours by the time he was de-mobbed in 1945. He became a member of the 'Caterpillar Club', an informal association of people who had saved their lives having successfully used a parachute to bail out of a disabled aircraft.

His Journal after WW2

- 1946 - After the war, John was adamant that he did not wish to return to his old carpentry and joinery trade. He applied to Southend Borough Police but did not qualify because he was $\frac{1}{2}$ inch too short, the minimum height being 5ft 10 inches. He then applied for the Metropolitan Police whose minimum height requirement was only 5ft 8 inches.
- 1947 - Joined the Metropolitan Police and trained at Hendon. At the end of John's training, Kay was living at Rochford and there were no police houses available. After about a year John transferred to Essex Police and was posted to Brentwood in Essex. They were housed in an old mansion which was used as police quarters. The mansion was called 'La Plata' (Spanish for 'The Silver House') which had approximately 40 bedrooms. It was empty at the time and quite a lonely, daunting place to live.
- 1949 - John did not enjoy working at Brentwood and did not get on at all with the Superintendent. The situation got so bad that John was transferred out to the remotest of locations in Great Wakering. Unbeknown to the Superintendent this suited them down to the ground since Kay came from Rochford.

- 1951 - John & Kay moved into a brand new semi-detached police house, 290 High Street, Great Wakering. Next door at Number 288 lived PC Ken Griffiths who had already moved in and had been the policeman for Great Wakering for several years whilst living in Little Wakering at the time. His only form of transport in Great Wakering was his bicycle. At the time, the level of pay as a serving police officer was so low that John started to do casual carpentry jobs in the village to supplement his income, despite this being frowned upon by the police authority. The photograph shows John posing with two willing stooge prisoners.

- 1955 - John enjoyed his job in the police at Great Wakering but with two young children could not afford to stay so he decided to resign and get back into the carpentry trade. On leaving the force they had to give up their brand new home so they rented an old house in Little Wakering Road. Giving up their nice new home saddened Kay but she realised that there was no option; the house came with the job. Initially John found it was quite a struggle to get enough work to earn a decent wage but eventually some lucrative work started to pick up at Coryton. Several years later, John was able to start his own business initially building exhibition stands for Olympia. Kay had opened a small shop in Little Wakering Road to supplement the household income but by 1980 business had declined. They eventually bought a house in Southend and Kay took on more permanent employment including working as a clerk/typist for the Southend Courts for five years.

- 1984 - John died suddenly of a brain haemorrhage.
- 1985 - A year after John's death some Belgians excavated the area where John was shot down and came across his plane. Kay was fortunate to get to see parts of the wreckage and to this day she exchanges Christmas cards with one of the Belgians involved in the excavation.

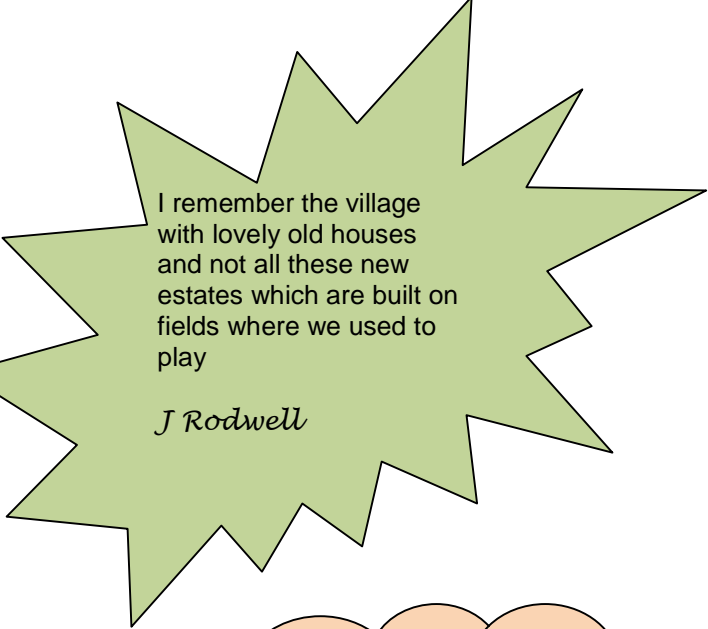


Memorable Incidents

- The Floods of 1953 - John Marshall and Ken Griffiths both went over to Foulness Island in rowing boats to help get people off the island since it was so badly flooded. Kay, and Ken's wife Vera, manned the telephones at the Police Station. Kay remembers distinctly a local farmer ringing through in distress to say that their cattle were drowning and dying.

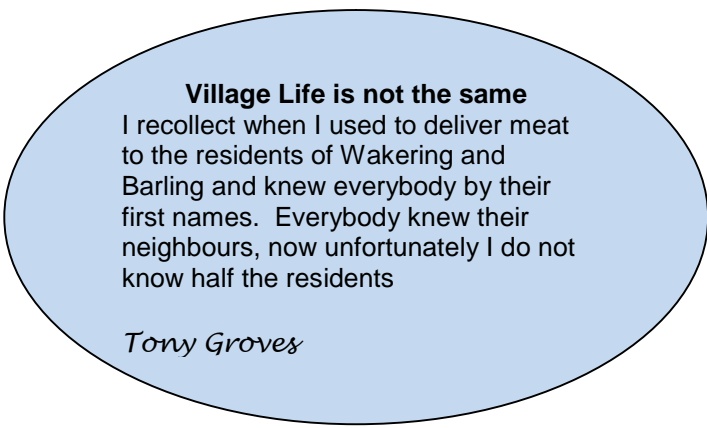
• The Police station occasionally housed stray and injured animals and clearly remembers somebody bringing in a Barn Owl. Night-time had arrived and they were still waiting for the RSPCA to call but they happened to open the door and the owl flew away. • Kay remembers John's colleague, Ken Griffiths who one night was coasting along on his bike and he could sense something white over his shoulder. He looked around and saw a white owl flying alongside and close to him for quite some distance.

These are Kay Marshall's memories written up by Richard Kirton who is researching the history of village policing and has information on his website <http://www.wakeringnaturalhistory.org/heritage/>



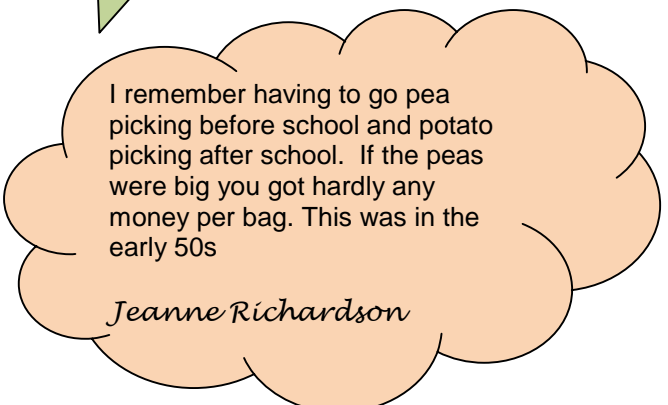
I remember the village with lovely old houses and not all these new estates which are built on fields where we used to play

J Rodwell



Village Life is not the same
I recollect when I used to deliver meat to the residents of Wakering and Barling and knew everybody by their first names. Everybody knew their neighbours, now unfortunately I do not know half the residents

Tony Groves



I remember having to go pea picking before school and potato picking after school. If the peas were big you got hardly any money per bag. This was in the early 50s

Jeanne Richardson

If you would like to contribute to "Small Beginnings" please contact:

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The village website

contains copies of past newsletters, and photos from various reunions.

There are also many photographs of people and events in Little Wakering, Great Wakering and Barling villages, and Barling School.

It is easy to navigate around and is well worth a look.

Terry Mumford works very hard to maintain and add to this excellent website which can be found at <http://www.barlingwakeringvillages.co.uk/index.html>

(if you are online, click on the address to go to the website)